



SACHI A. HAMAI  
Chief Executive Officer

## County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl  
Supervisor Don Knabe  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Sachi A. Hamai  
Chief Executive Officer

Board of Supervisors  
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### **SECOND STATUS REPORT ON COORDINATED REVIEW OF PROBATION CHALLENGES**

On April 18, 2016, the Chief Executive Office (CEO) convened a working group that included representatives from the Departments of Auditor-Controller (A-C), County Counsel (CoCo), Human Resources (DHR), and Probation Department (Probation) to coordinate reviews of the management and administrative challenges at Probation. In many instances, the reviews address issues raised in prior reports to the Board or in recent Board actions. The action areas include:

1. Organizational Structure and Oversight
2. Staff Recruitment, Selection, Promotions and Training
3. Fiscal Controls
4. Creation of Data Driven Systems
5. Court Collaboration in Juvenile Case Planning
6. Contracting with Community Based Organizations
7. Average Daily Cost per Youth
8. Maintenance of Juvenile Institutions
9. AB109

On May 12, 2016, we submitted our first status report. This memorandum serves to provide an update to our prior status report, including summarizing the working group's efforts to address the action areas noted above. Depending on the area, the work

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group meets at least monthly to ensure progress is being made to address issues raised in each action area.

### **ACTIONS AREAS**

Action Item #1: Organizational Structure and Oversight  
Deliverable(s): Establish Stronger Leadership and Accountability  
Lead Depts: Probation, CEO, A-C and CoCo  
Due Date: Ongoing

The Board also has approved two separate motions, which are:

- 1) February 2, 2016 – Establishes a working group to assess the current landscape of entities tasked with evaluating, monitoring and/or correcting the work of Probation, including the feasibility of establishing a permanent Probation Oversight Commission, similar to that recently established to oversee the Sheriff's Department, to oversee the operations of Probation.
- 2) February 16, 2016 – Authorizes the CEO, in conjunction with the Executive Director of the Countywide Criminal Justice Coordination Committee (CCJCC), Interim Chief Probation Officer, and the A-C, to engage a consultant with expertise in best practices of probation system reform efforts, criminal and juvenile justice matters, and youth development for the Probation Governance Model review.

### **NEW UPDATE**

The working group has continued its bi-monthly meetings gathering information from the various entities involved with Probation. The working group anticipates completing its information gathering phase by mid-October 2016 and plans to have its initial recommendations on the feasibility of establishing a permanent Probation Oversight Commission by the end of November 2016.

Resource Development Associates (RDA) has been selected as the consultant for the Probation Governance Model Review. Currently, CEO, Probation and CoCo are in the process of reviewing and finalizing the contract. Due to the wide scope of the Statement of Work, RDA will be working with sensitive juvenile information that will cross over to multiple County departments which is contributing to the complexity of the contract. All parties are working towards the goal of completing the contract as soon as possible.

Action Item #2: Staff Recruitment, Selection, Promotions, and Training  
Deliverable(s): Use of Best Practice in Hiring, Promoting, and Training Employees  
Lead Depts: DHR, CEO, and Probation  
Due Date: 60 days for Initial Review

### **NEW UPDATE**

On May 11, 2016, the working group consisting of representatives from the lead departments met to discuss this action item. DHR presented its work plan that included a review of Probation's recruitment practices and outreach, background processes and documentation, hiring practices, attrition, return-to-work, training, and exam and testing practices. DHR assigned two teams to concurrently study separate areas of focus. A schedule for regular meetings was established to keep the working group apprised of DHR's progress.

Short-term strategies included a review and assessment of Probation's existing recruitment practices and recruitment plan as well as to evaluate its background screening process. On July 12, 2016, the working group met and DHR representatives reported the following:

#### **Recruitment Practices and Plan**

DHR acknowledged Probation's efforts to put effective recruitment strategies in place, but identified the need for a full-time position(s) dedicated to this function. This would enable Probation to strengthen its recruitment function through increased tracking and evaluation of recruitment resources and outcomes, and provide continuous cost/benefit assessments of various recruitment activities. Furthermore, it would enable Probation to determine whether current recruitment strategies effectively reach populations that yield quality candidates who can successfully navigate the examination and background processes. In addition, it is recommended that Probation use the information gained from their online survey of applicants, which is part of the examination process, to track recruitment outcomes.

#### **Background Screening Process**

Probation has initiated steps to improve the effectiveness of the background screening process. Last month, Probation entered into a contract with three vendors to conduct polygraph screening of applicants. Also recently, Probation implemented a pre-screening questionnaire for open-competitive exams for the entry-level class of Detention Services Officer, as a front-end means to quickly identify candidates who do not meet the standards of employment and must be disqualified. However, Probation needs to track the effectiveness of the pre-screening questionnaire by tracking how many candidates are disqualified utilizing this new pre-screening tool. The DHR team

also determined that Probation needs to track and evaluate the pass rate at each phase of the background process to assess whether certain phases are unnecessarily disqualifying candidates.

The DHR team is conducting a survey of 20 agencies, including the top five most populous counties nationwide and top 15 most populous California counties participating in Standard Training of Corrections. The purpose of the survey is to determine how Probation's background process compares to similar agencies. The survey will identify best practices in background components, including timeframes, workload, and employee classifications of those performing background investigations. The summary and analysis of responses received is in progress and is expected to be completed within the next two weeks and will include more complete findings and specific recommendations.

Pending a review, a determination of whether Probation's background function is adequately staffed, properly organized; positions are assigned the appropriate scope of work, and to identify if other models could enhance the program. Also pending is a review of Probation's Background Tracking System and assessing quality of case documentation. Once completed, the DHR team will commence their evaluation of Probation's hiring practices and attrition rates in mission critical classes.

Action Item #3: Fiscal Controls  
Deliverable(s): Establish Accounting and Administrative Controls to Monitor and Maintain Compliance with County Fiscal Policy  
Lead Depts: Probation, A-C, and CEO  
Due Date: Ongoing

### **NEW UPDATE**

CEO, Probation and A-C representatives met in June 2016 to discuss the status of prior A-C audit recommendations. Probation's representatives indicate that their Department continues to make progress in implementing all recommendations and has assigned staff to verify that each recommendation is fully implemented.

On August 15, 2016, the A-C commenced follow up reviews at Probation to determine the implementation status of its prior audit recommendations. The A-C will report the results of its follow up reviews to the Board.

Action Item #4: *Creation of Data Driven Systems*  
Deliverable(s): Create Data Sets and Monitoring Reports to Track Outcomes and Inform Practice and Policy Decisions  
Lead Depts: Probation  
Due Date: December 31, 2016

#### **NEW UPDATE**

Since the last status report, Probation's Quality Assurance Services Bureau (QASB), along with Dr. Michael Schumacher, Consultant, prepared a Research Unit Expansion plan and a Research Plan (Research Agenda or Agenda) to further enhance the Probation's research and evaluation functions. The Expansion Plan provides a road map for staffing the QASB's Research Unit to enhance its ability to support Probation's quality assurance function, key outcome reporting, program evaluations, and pursue a research agenda that is in line with the Board of Supervisors' and Probation's vision.

The Research Agenda was developed to support the Probation's use of data and research to inform practice, programming, and policy decision-making to improve the delivery of probation-related services. The Agenda will also facilitate contributions to the fields of juvenile and criminal justice by dissemination of research findings via presentations and publications to groups beyond Probation.

Dr. Schumacher is preparing a report for the Interim Chief Probation Officer on the collection of research, program evaluation and operational data used by Probation. It will provide an assessment of Probation's current state of data collection and outcome measures and will include recommendations for improvement. The report, due mid-September, is an inventory of the data bases currently in use in Probation, the location and their functions.

Action Item #5: *Court Collaboration in Juvenile Case Planning*  
Deliverable(s): To Increase Front End Collaboration between the Courts and Probation as Well as Improve Services Offered in Court Ordered Juvenile Case Plans  
Lead Depts: Probation, CEO and CoCo  
Due Date: Ongoing

#### **NEW UPDATE**

On June 30, 2016, a monthly Juvenile Justice Roundtable (Roundtable) was convened that included representatives from District Attorney, Public Defender, Alternate Public Defender, Probation, CoCo, and CEO. Judge Michael Levanas chairs the Roundtable and is assisted by Judge Donna Groman. CEO and CoCo staff provided an overview of

Action Item #5 and this group is committed to working together to improve both front-end collaboration on delinquency and dependency case planning and services offered to juveniles through these monthly Roundtable meetings.

Action Item #6: Contracting with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)  
Deliverable(s): Develop Recommendations to Streamline Board-Directed Allocation of Grant Funds to CBOs  
Lead Depts: Probation, Internal Services Department (ISD), CEO and CoCo  
Due Date: Ongoing

### **NEW UPDATE**

On July 7, 2016, the working group consisting of representatives from Probation, ISD, CoCo, and CEO met to discuss streamlining contracting with CBOs. The Request for Proposal (RFP) process is the most commonly used competitive process and has been historically used in the allocation of funds to CBOs. Although the RFP process is the most common and effective solicitation method for obtaining the CBO services, the time constraints within the RFP process is not conducive for immediate allocations of funding. While some of the timelines for internal and external reviews may be reduced, the overall RFP timeline is lengthy compared with other solicitation processes. As a result, other options such as the Request for Statement of Qualifications (RFSQ) and the Request for Applications (RFA) will be explored to allocate future funding to CBOs. These two methods are not as time prohibitive as the RFP process and could help streamline the process of allocating future funds. ISD has committed to working with Probation to explore piloting these contracting options for future CBO solicitations. Additionally, the use of these contracting options will require that CoCo determine their appropriateness for services being requested.

In addition, on August 24, 2016, ISD will be conducting a four-hour training for CBOs on the County's contracting process. Agencies that have expressed an interest in contracting with Probation will be contacted and invited to attend. At the training, ISD will explain the RFSQ and RFA contracting processes.

Action Item #7: Average Daily Cost Per Youth  
Deliverable(s): Report Analyzing the Average Daily Cost to Operate Probation's Juvenile Institutions  
Lead Depts: CEO, A-C, and Probation  
Due Date: August 31, 2016

### **NEW UPDATE**

We have completed our analysis of the average daily cost to operate Probation's juvenile institutions and are in the process of drafting our report and verifying the results of our analysis with Probation and A-C representatives. We estimate issuing a report to the Board before August 31, 2016.

Action Item #8: Maintenance of Juvenile Institutions  
Deliverable(s): Develop a Plan to Address Deferred Maintenance at Probation Juvenile Institutions  
Lead Depts: Probation, CEO, and ISD  
Due Date: Ongoing

### **NEW UPDATE**

On May 17, 2016, a working group consisting of representatives from Probation, ISD and the CEO commenced monthly meetings to discuss Probation's juvenile institutions deferred maintenance issues, capital projects, and current maintenance priorities. In addition, during June and July 2016, site visits were conducted to help identify deferred maintenance issues. Probation is developing a comprehensive list that prioritizes all unmet deferred maintenance and capital project needs. The listing will be updated quarterly and discussed amongst the working group members; with consideration given to the potential closure of certain facilities. Probation's Management Services Bureau (MSB) representatives will present the listing of the aforementioned items at its next monthly working group meeting in August.

In addition to the working group, Probation representatives actively participate in the Facilities Maintenance Standards Multi-Department Working Group, directed by the Asset Management Steering Group. Information from these meetings is being shared with Probation's MSB management team to help improve facilities maintenance standards.

Action Item #9: AB109  
Deliverable(s): Evaluate the Effectiveness of AB109 and Whether the Data Being Reported is Sufficient and Effective  
Lead Depts: CEO, CCJCC, A-C, ISAB, Probation and CoCo  
Due Date: Ongoing

### **NEW UPDATE**

CCJCC released a RFSQ to establish a criminal justice research and evaluation services Master Agreement with qualified organizations. Based on this Master

Agreement list, Probation (as the lead on AB 109 evaluations) with assistance from CCJCC will release a Request for Services (RFS). The statement of work for the RFS will not be limited to Probation but will also incorporate the evaluation of other AB 109 programs supported by County departments. The RFS will be released for approximately a one-month turnaround for proposal submittals. The review, evaluation, and selection, as well as the Board process for work order approval, would then follow. The release of the RFS is targeted for August 2016.

### **NEXT STEPS**

My office will continue to coordinate and regularly monitor the working group's progress to ensure timely reporting on each area of concern noted above. Quarterly status reports will be provided to your Board to keep you informed of our progress. The next status report will be due in 90 days.

Should you have any questions, please contact me or your staff may contact DeWitt Roberts, at (562) 940-2511 or Anna Hom-Wong, at (213) 893-2295.

SAH:JJ:SW:  
RP:AHW:cc

c:     Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
        Auditor-Controller  
        County Counsel  
        Countywide Criminal Justice Coordination Committee  
        Human Resources  
        Internal Services  
        Probation